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2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Report submitted by France under actions 5, 20 and 21 of the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

1. As indicated in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Governments of the five nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty seek to implement action 5 in order to further enhance transparency and increase mutual confidence and to prepare national reports on action 5 and their other commitments, as presented in 2014 to the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties within a common framework, in accordance with actions 20 and 21. Action 21 states that as a confidence-building measure, all the nuclear-weapon States are encouraged to agree as soon as possible on a standard reporting form and to determine appropriate reporting intervals for the purpose of voluntarily providing standard information without prejudice to national security. The standard reporting form used in France's national reports includes categories, each relating to a different topic, under which relevant information is reported; the categories cover the three pillars of the Treaty: disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. France encourages all States parties to submit similar reports, in keeping with action 20.

Section I
National disarmament measures

2. France is fully committed to disarmament in accordance with the objectives of the Treaty. Its approach is comprehensive, progressive and practical:

(a) Comprehensive and progressive, because the goal of nuclear disarmament cannot be considered separately from collective security. Nuclear disarmament is possible only if the strategic context is taken into account and should be viewed as part of a gradual process that will guarantee all parties undiminished security and prevent a new arms race.

(b) Practical, because action is what matters. In that regard, France has taken very significant unilateral measures and made ambitious proposals for the determined pursuit of nuclear disarmament at the international level.

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I. National security policies, and nuclear-weapons doctrine and related activities

3. The French doctrine is presented publicly on a regular basis. Its basic tenets may be found, specifically, in the French President's public speeches, the most recent of which was delivered in Istres, France, on 19 February 2015, and the white papers on defence and national security, the latest of which was made public in 2013. These communications reaffirm the validity and principles of nuclear deterrence as understood by France, and help build confidence. Regular public statements such as these are necessary, even when there are no new developments. The reiteration of these principles is valuable, as it affords predictability and therefore improves stability.

4. In general, the role of nuclear weapons in France's doctrine of defence and national security is strictly limited to the defence of its vital interests, in extreme circumstances of self-defence.

5. In the light of the aforementioned latest white paper and the recent statement by the President of France, the fundamental principles of French nuclear deterrence are:

(a) **Political control of nuclear weapons**. France emphasizes the political conception of the use of nuclear weapons, for which the President of the Republic has the ultimate responsibility. Their control is therefore strictly political.

(b) **Nuclear weapons: designed to deter, not to be used**. In the French doctrine of deterrence, nuclear weapons are not battlefield weapons but a means of deterring a potential adversary from attacking vital national interests. For deterrence to work, the circumstances under which nuclear weapons would be used are not, nor should they be, precisely defined, so as not to enable the potential aggressor to calculate the risk inherent in such an attack.

(c) **Nuclear deterrence is strictly defensive**. France does not threaten any State, and its deterrence is not targeted. That was made clear in 1997 and has been reiterated since on many occasions. Potential adversaries must however be aware that the purpose of nuclear deterrence is to protect the country's vital interests against any State-led aggression, whatever its origin or its form.

(d) **Used only in extreme circumstances of self-defence**. French nuclear deterrence is governed by a threshold approach, regardless of the nature of the threat. Conversely, other doctrines advocate policies that depend on the nature of the threat — policies that seem reassuring for those who are concerned about the potential use of nuclear weapons. However, a deterrence threshold approach does not give nuclear weapons a greater role, provided the threshold is high. Such is clearly the case in French doctrine, whereby nuclear weapons may only conceivably be used in extreme circumstances of self-defence, a right enshrined in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

(e) **Application of the principle of strict sufficiency**. France adjusts the level and characteristics of its arsenal to the strategic context, at the minimum level needed to ensure its security. The threshold of sufficiency is determined by a national analysis of the strategic context.

(f) **Security assurances**. In his speech on 19 February 2015, the President of the Republic reaffirmed the security assurances given by France to all the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty that comply with their international non-proliferation obligations. These security assurances are derived from:

(i) The French doctrine of deterrence, inasmuch as it unambiguously and consistently sets out the strictly defensive role of deterrence. Hence, the French doctrine is in itself a security assurance for non-nuclear-weapon States.

(ii) The statement made on 6 April 1995, whereby France reaffirmed, to all non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty, the security assurances it had given in 1982. The Security Council took note of it in its resolution 984 (1995). France considers that commitment legally binding, as reiterated by the President of the Republic in his statement on 19 February 2015. It therefore considers itself fully bound by the commitment and means to apply it in good faith.

(iii) The signing of the protocols to the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, which cover more than one hundred States.

6. These commitments do not affect the right to self-defence as enshrined in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

II. Nuclear weapons, arms control (including nuclear disarmament) and verification

7. Disarmament is of the utmost importance to France, as demonstrated by its actions and tangible achievements, which have required investment of considerable financial and human resources.

A. Status and reduction of arsenals and nuclear forces

1. Reducing the size of French deterrent forces

8. In keeping with the principle of strict sufficiency, France's arsenal is maintained at the lowest possible level in the light of the strategic context and the foreseeable development of the threat. French nuclear forces are currently divided into seaborne and airborne components:

(a) Seaborne component: four nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines based at Île Longue and equipped with M51 intercontinental ballistic missiles providing continuous seaborne deterrence.

(b) Airborne component: airborne support is provided by the air force on French soil or from the aircraft carrier *Charles de Gaulle*, using Mirage 2000N and Rafale aircraft carrying improved medium-range air-to-surface missiles.

9. As stated by the President of the Republic on 19 February 2015, France has fewer than 300 nuclear warheads. It has no undeployed weapons. All of its weapons are deployed and operational.

10. That figure reflects a very significant decrease in the size of French forces, as a result of changes in the strategic context. France has cut its arsenal in half in the past decade.

11. France acquired three nuclear components during the Cold War. Since then, in view of the changing strategic context, France has reduced its nuclear arsenal as follows:

(a) **A one-third reduction in the seaborne component**: The number of nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine in the seaborne component was cut from six to four. France has begun dismantling its M4 nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines. The submarine *Le Redoutable* has been open to the public at the Cité de la Mer in Cherbourg since May 2002. A series of complex operations was of course carried out beforehand under optimum nuclear security conditions. The remaining nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines will follow the normal cycle leading to their total elimination.

(b) **Major reductions in the airborne component**: These include the early decommissioning and dismantling of the AN52 nuclear bombs carried by Jaguar and Mirage III aircraft, announced in 1991; and the withdrawal of Mirage IV strategic aircraft from nuclear missions in 1996 (strategic missions were then taken over by the three M2000N and, later, the Rafale squadrons, which joined the strategic air forces at that time). In 2008, France announced its decision to reduce its airborne component by a third. That reduction was completed in 2013; as a result, France's total nuclear armament is less than 300 nuclear warheads. All decommissioned weapons have been dismantled.

(c) **Elimination of the surface-to-surface component**: In 1991, France announced several decisions aimed at reducing its surface-to-surface component: early withdrawal of Pluton short-range missiles (completed in 1993); scaling down of the Hadès missile programme (intended to replace the Pluton missiles) from 120 to 30 units; and elimination of the S45 surface-to-surface missiles, which were to replace the S3D missiles at the Plateau d'Albion. In 1992, the Hadès missile programme, intended to replace the Pluton missiles, was terminated. In 1997, dismantling of the 30 Hadès missiles that had been produced was completed. Thus, the substrategic land component was eliminated. In 1996, the strategic surface-to-surface component in turn was abandoned, as France announced the final withdrawal and dismantling of the Plateau d'Albion surface-to-surface systems. Two years later, in 1998, the dismantling of all S3D missiles was completed. Thus, France is the only State that has had a surface-to-surface nuclear force and subsequently completely dismantled it.

12. In the interests of transparency, the President of the Republic announced, on 19 February 2015, that France had three sets of 16 submarine-borne missiles and 54 improved medium-range air-to-surface delivery systems.

2. Reduction of alert levels

13. France's alert levels have seen as significant a reduction as the size of its nuclear forces. It has twice scaled back its nuclear forces' permanent alert level, in 1992 and in 1996. These reductions were in both the response times of forces and the number of weapons systems on alert. Specifically:

(a) Since 1996, France has kept only one nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine permanently at sea.

(b) Since the removal of the missiles at Plateau d'Albion, France no longer has capabilities on permanent high alert.

(c) In 1997, France also announced the detargeting of all its nuclear forces. It has consistently reaffirmed that since.

14. France's nuclear posture is not one of "launch on warning" or "launch under attack" or what some commentators call the "hair-trigger alert" posture. Strict procedures have been put in place to ensure that no weapons can be used without an order from the President of the Republic. Alert status and posture decisions are the responsibility of the President of the Republic.

B. Activities relating to the discontinuation of the production of fissile material for weapons, and efforts to promote a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices

1. Moratorium on the production of fissile material for weapons

15. France stopped producing fissile material in 1992 (plutonium) and 1996 (highly enriched uranium) to support its nuclear weapons programmes. It announced a moratorium on the production of such material in 1996.

2. Dismantling of the former fissile material production facilities for weapons

16. In 1996, France undertook the dismantling of its production units in Marcoule and Pierrelatte. France intended the decommissioning to be complete and irreversible. The decommissioning operations represent a considerable financial investment: a total of €6 billion, €2 billion of which has already been spent.

17. The Pierrelatte enrichment facility has now been fully decommissioned. The operations involved dismantling 4,000 diffusers, 1,330 tons of diffusion barriers, and 1,200 km of piping. Decommissioning of the Marcoule UP1 reprocessing facility began in 1997 and will continue until 2035.

18. Moreover, the first phase of clean-up and dismantling of the G1, G2 and G3 plutonium production reactors at Marcoule has been completed, and the second phase, slated to begin in 2020, will continue until 2035.

3. Commitment to concluding a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices

19. France sets a high priority on the initiation of negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. Such negotiations are the next logical step, at the multilateral level, in creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in keeping with the objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and in the context of a realistic approach based on concrete, progressive measures.

20. France takes the view that a fissile material cut-off treaty should place a quantitative limit on arsenals by stopping the production of fissile material for the manufacture of nuclear weapons. Such a treaty would be the indispensable complement to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. It therefore seems essential that such a treaty cover all countries possessing nuclear weapons today.

21. Pending its entry into force, all States concerned should, as France has done, declare a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

22. France is a member of the group of governmental experts established by General Assembly resolution 67/53. It considers that the group's discussions can usefully contribute to the preparation of future negotiations on a legally binding international instrument. On 19 February 2015, the French President announced that France would soon submit a draft treaty to the disarmament community and called on the five nuclear-weapon States to begin negotiations on that instrument without further delay.

C. Activities to end nuclear testing and promotion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

1. Complete cessation of nuclear tests

23. France ended all its nuclear tests in 1996. It signed, on 24 September 1996, and ratified, on 6 April 1998, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

24. France is carrying out activities aimed at guaranteeing the safety and reliability of its nuclear weapons. These include a simulation programme and hydrodynamic experiments designed to model materials' performance under extreme physical conditions and, more broadly, the weapons' functioning. These activities rigorously respect France's obligations under the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which bans all nuclear explosions, whatever their yield, and ends the development of new and more advanced types of nuclear weapons. In other words, the simulation programme is designed only to ensure the safety and reliability of existing weapons and in no way to enable the development of new and more advanced types of weapons.

2. Complete and irreversible dismantling of the former Pacific Testing Centre

25. In 1996, at the same time as it ended nuclear testing, France decided to completely and irreversibly dismantle the sites of the Pacific Testing Centre, on the atolls of Mururoa and Fangataufa.

26. The sites were fully decommissioned in 1998; clean-up operations were then conducted to eliminate any radiological risk. A team of experts from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) conducted an independent, comprehensive and objective evaluation of the present and future radiological conditions of the atolls of Mururoa and Fangataufa and concluded, in its 1998 report *The Radiological Situation at the Atolls of Mururoa and Fangataufa*, that there was no risk. France maintains radiological and geomechanical monitoring of the atolls to this day.

3. Support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

27. France actively supports efforts to extend accession to of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to the States listed in annex 2 to the Treaty and such other States as have not acceded to the Treaty. It has undertaken its own initiatives, particularly in Francophone countries, and participates in the Treaty promotion efforts of the Group of Eminent Persons established in September 2013 by the Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). It aligns itself with the European Union's support of CTBTO, as stipulated in the decision by the Council of the European Union regarding support for the activities of the Preparatory Commission for CTBTO.

28. France also provides technical support to CTBTO, in particular for the completion of the verification regime provided for under the Treaty. The following actions have been undertaken:

(a) Regarding the international monitoring system, France deploys and operates 17 stations in its territory and provides technical assistance for the operation and maintenance of 8 stations abroad. France also makes a significant contribution to the engineering work necessary to implement the international monitoring system, in particular as regards new technologies such as infrasound (sensors, station engineering, and calibration techniques) and the measurement of noble gases. France's National Data Centre supports the development of the CTBTO International Data Centre by providing software (infrasound data analysis, performance monitoring tools for the network of stations) and by seeking innovative solutions. In that way, France participates actively in the evaluation of the verification regime's effectiveness, maintains close relations with many national data centres and contributes to their development.

(b) Regarding the on-site inspections system, France assists directly with the system's development (inspectors, inspection techniques and the preparation of and participation in major exercises such as Integrated Field Exercise 2014 (IFE14)), and also contributes through research efforts.

III. Transparency and confidence-building measures

29. France is committed to transparency among the five nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and vis-à-vis non-nuclear-weapon States. It contributes to transparency efforts unilaterally and on a voluntary basis through:

(a) Regular efforts at transparency regarding its deterrence doctrine and its basic tenets. France sees this as an important contribution to the stability and predictability of relations among nuclear-weapon States and between those States and non-nuclear-weapon States.

(b) Transparency regarding its nuclear forces. The following should be noted in particular:

(i) The announcement that France has fewer than 300 warheads (in total, and not just the number of operational strategic weapons deployed).

(ii) The announcement that France has no nuclear weapons in reserve.

(iii) The announcement (and reminders) of the detargeting of nuclear weapons.

(iv) Pre-launch notification of all space and ballistic missile launches under the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation: Between January 2010 and December 2014, France issued 44 pre-launch notifications, equal to the number of French space and missile launches conducted during that period. In addition, a statement is published each year, in keeping with the confidence-building and transparency measures laid down in the International Code of Conduct, outlining French policy on ballistic missiles and spacecraft. Lastly, for the first time in the history of the International Code of Conduct and in fulfilment of one of its provisions, France in 2011 hosted an inspection by international observers at the Guiana Space Centre in Kourou.

(c) Transparency regarding practical disarmament measures taken by France, in particular the dismantling of its nuclear testing facilities in the Pacific and the Pierrelatte and Marcoule facilities for the production of fissile materials for weapons. France organized visits to its former fissile material production facilities on 16 September 2008 by representatives of upwards of 40 States members of the Conference on Disarmament; on 16 March 2009 by non-governmental experts; and on 3 July 2009 by international journalists. Consistent with the same spirit of transparency, the President of the Republic indicated, in his speech on 19 February 2015, that France would soon propose a visit to additional sites from which all nuclear weapons have been removed.

(d) Participation in the efforts of the five nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty, led by China, to develop and finalize a glossary of nuclear terminology, comprising 228 terms defined and translated in the four working languages of those States. Issues of definition and nuclear terminology are indeed essential for deepening mutual understanding and facilitating dialogue among the five nuclear-weapon States as well as between those States and the non-nuclear-weapon States.

IV. Other relevant actions

30. Nuclear disarmament makes sense only so long as it does not lead to an arms race in other areas. It needs to be viewed as part of general and complete disarmament, in accordance with article VI of the Treaty. France therefore has also taken major initiatives in other areas of disarmament.

31. France is the depositary State of the 1925 Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare; it is also the country in which the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction was opened for signature in 1993. France has worked towards the universalization of that Convention through national and European initiatives. At the operational level, France supports the efforts of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in tackling the exceptional challenge of dismantling the Syrian chemical arsenal.

32. In the framework of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and

on their Destruction, France has for some years been proposing a peer review mechanism. This is an innovative approach the purpose of which is to strengthen one of the main counter-proliferation instruments. In December 2013 in Paris, France conducted a pilot peer review exercise on the national implementation of the Convention.

33. A significant milestone in recent years in the area of conventional weapons was the adoption by the General Assembly, on 2 April 2013, of the Arms Trade Treaty, in the negotiation of which France played a significant role. France signed the Treaty on 3 June 2013; was among the first, alongside its European partners, to ratify it; and has actively worked towards its universalization ever since.

34. France is also a party to the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, which provides for the destruction of anti-personnel mine stockpiles and the clearance of mined areas, as well as to the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, which contains similar provisions. It has complied with its obligations under the first of these Conventions in advance of the deadlines set therein, and scrupulously respects its obligations under the Convention on Cluster Munitions, having devoted nearly €20 million to the destruction of its stockpiles of cluster munitions.

35. France is also a party to the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons).

36. During its chairmanship in 2013 and 2014 of the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, France obtained a mandate for the discussion of lethal autonomous weapons systems (so-called "killer robots"). Similar discussions were held during the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties in November 2014.

Section II
National non-proliferation measures

37. The proliferation of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery is a threat to international peace and security, as well as to the regions concerned. France therefore considers it imperative to resolutely oppose such proliferation. France's actions to combat nuclear proliferation and to promote implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference have three strategic priorities: to strengthen the non-proliferation regime; to respond to proliferation crises; and to further develop efforts to prevent and impede proliferation.

I. Implementation of and support for safeguards

38. France is committed to the IAEA safeguards regime, which is at the heart of the non-proliferation regime and the strengthening thereof. France itself is subject to many checks by IAEA and by the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom).

A. French safeguard commitments

1. Voluntary offer agreement

39. With a view to strengthening the safeguards system, France has offered to make certain civil nuclear material subject to IAEA safeguards. The safeguards are applied under a trilateral agreement between France, Euratom and IAEA (INFCIRC/290), which entered into force in 1981.

2. Communication of additional information

40. France has also voluntarily agreed to transmit additional information to IAEA:

(a) Notification of imports and exports of nuclear material (INFCIRC 207/Add.1, 1984).

(b) Notification of imports and exports of concentrates of uranium and thorium (INFCIRC 415, 1992).

(c) Annual statement of holdings of civil irradiated and unirradiated plutonium and highly enriched uranium (INFCIRC 549, 1998).

3. Additional Protocol

41. To enhance IAEA's ability to detect possible clandestine nuclear activities carried out by non-nuclear-weapon States, France signed an Additional Protocol to its 1998 safeguards agreement (entry into force 30 April 2004). The Additional Protocol is an essential instrument in France's efforts in respect of nuclear non-proliferation. The two following points in the French Additional Protocol warrant special attention:

(a) **Complementary access**: IAEA inspectors may, on at least 24 hours' notice, request access to any location in France — and so to any nuclear facility — in order to resolve any question as to the accuracy and completeness of the information provided pursuant to the provisions of the Protocol, or to resolve certain contradictions in that information and, by cross-referencing, to gather possible evidence of clandestine nuclear activity by a non-nuclear-weapon State. Complementary access methodology, as well as the activities inspectors may engage in during such access (e.g. environmental sampling, measurements), are similar to those provided for in the model additional protocol proposed by IAEA.

(b) **Provision to IAEA of information on cooperation with non-nuclear-weapon States relating to all aspects of the fuel cycle**. For example, France informs IAEA of its plans for nuclear cooperation involving the fuel cycle with non-nuclear-weapon States over the next 10 years.

B. Safeguards inspections by the European Atomic Energy Community

42. Like its European Union partners, France is subject to safeguards inspections by the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) relating to all civil nuclear material covered by the Treaty establishing Euratom. As a result, all French facilities holding civil nuclear materials are subject to Euratom inspection. Such inspection seeks to verify that the use of those materials is consistent with that declared by the users.

C. Exemplary inspections of the French civil nuclear cycle

43. Because of the number and diversity of nuclear installations in France, the country is subject to major inspections covering all facilities involved in civil nuclear activities. In 2013, 336 inspections were conducted by Euratom. Such a vast undertaking has made France one of the most closely inspected countries in the world.

44. Sensitive nuclear fuel cycle facilities in France are also subject to IAEA safeguards: the new Georges Besse II enrichment plant has been subject to inspections equivalent to those conducted by IAEA at similar facilities in European non-nuclear-weapon States. Some parts of the La Hague processing and recycling plant and the Melox MOX (a mix of uranium and plutonium oxides) fuel fabrication plant are also subject to IAEA safeguards. These facilities are furthermore subject to Euratom safeguards. Thus, the spent fuel reprocessing plant at La Hague is the European facility most thoroughly inspected in Europe.

45. In 2013, Euratom verification activities in France included 336 inspections; 1,475 person-days of inspection; and the submission of 214,320 accounting items. In the same year, IAEA safeguards activities carried out in France involved 26 inspections; 113 person-days of inspection; submission of 80,000 accounting items; and 18 statements provided under the Additional Protocol (15 for France and 3 for the European Union).

D. Political, technical and financial support for the safeguards

1. Political support

46. France has taken steps to promote the Additional Protocol within the Group of Eight and the Group of Seven. France also actively supports European Union initiatives to promote the Additional Protocol (through financial contributions and targeted approaches).

47. At related meetings of the IAEA Board of Governors and General Conference, France has consistently called for the universalization of the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the additional protocol thereto as the verification standard. France has demonstrated its commitment to continuously enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the IAEA safeguards system, in particular through the implementation of safeguards at the State level.

48. France supports the Agency's activities to make States aware of the importance of the principle of stronger, universal safeguards. In 2013, specifically, it contributed financially to the organization of training seminars in Myanmar and in the Lao People's Democratic Republic in preparation for ratification of the additional protocol.

2. Technical and financial support

49. France is committed to the central role played by the IAEA safeguards system and seeks to ensure that IAEA has the requisite human, financial and technical resources to fulfil the mandate from the international community, thus ensuring the credibility of its verification mission.

50. A French support programme for IAEA safeguards was established in 1983 to give concrete expression to France's political support for the verification mission of IAEA. Under that programme, technology transfer, financial contributions and expert advice are provided to help the IAEA Department of Safeguards to make its verification methods more technically and economically efficient.

51. This programme is among the four largest national support programmes; the total value of its activities is estimated to be €1.5 million a year.

52. France has also contributed to the European Union's efforts to support IAEA verifications, specifically:

(a) Decisions of the Council of the European Union regarding support for IAEA activities in the areas of nuclear security and verification.

(b) Contributions to the modernization of IAEA safeguards laboratories as part of the Enhancing Capabilities of the Safeguards Analytical Services (ECAS) project.

E. Permanent safeguards for nuclear transfers required as part of France's civil nuclear cooperation

53. The intergovernmental agreements underlying France's commitment to civil nuclear cooperation with third countries contain specific clauses that make the materials, goods and equipment subject to IAEA safeguards (which apply under agreements concluded by a given country with IAEA). Should those safeguards not be applicable, the parties are expected to implement a mutually agreed system of safeguards, the effectiveness and scope of which are equivalent to those of IAEA. Finally, intergovernmental agreements generally stipulate that the safeguards provisions shall continue to apply even if the agreement is terminated or expires.

II. Export controls

A. France actively participates in international nuclear control regimes

54. As a member of the Zangger Committee and the Nuclear Suppliers Group, France contributes to international counter-proliferation efforts aimed at:

(a) Updating checklists and ensuring their continued relevance given contemporary technological developments.

(b) Raising awareness among non-member States of the need to strengthen export controls.

B. Implementing export control at the national level

55. The bilateral agreements governing the development of France's civil nuclear cooperation with third countries reflect the commitments made by France in the framework of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (e.g. the obligation to obtain assurances from the consignee in case of transfer or retransfer).

56. The common system of controls on exports, transfers, brokering services and transit of double-usage items established at the European Union level by Council Regulation EC No. 428/2009, which provides the checklists of the dual-use items (including software and technology) of all export control regimes, are directly applicable at the national level. The lists are regularly updated to reflect changing technologies and proliferation issues.

57. Finally, the French authorities have recourse as necessary to the "catch-all" clause (provided under the Regulation to allow export control for an unlisted item), for instance, where there is a serious risk that the item may have an application related to weapons of mass destruction.

C. Contribution to national capacity-building efforts

58. France actively supports European Union actions to generalize a European culture of non-proliferation, particularly with the implementation of the New Lines for Action by the European Union in Combating the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems, adopted in 2008 and renewed at the end of 2013.

59. A significant portion of the budget of the European Union's Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centres (totalling over €20 million a year) is devoted to financial, technical and operational assistance to third countries in order to help them strengthen their export control systems.

III. Nuclear security

A. Ratification of international conventions

60. France has been a party to all relevant international instruments in this area since it ratified the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, on 1 February 2013, and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, on 11 September 2013.

B. Implementation of IAEA recommendations

61. France has made significant progress on implementing the nuclear security recommendations on physical protection of nuclear materials and nuclear facilities (INFCIRC/225/Rev.5, IAEA Nuclear Security Series No. 13). French regulations incorporate virtually all the provisions of the IAEA circular and go even further in some cases. A peer review mission led by IAEA in Gravelines, France, in November 2011 highlighted the quality of the French nuclear security regime, particularly with regard to the physical protection of materials.

C. Action plan signed with IAEA to support its activities

62. In April 2005, France signed an action plan with IAEA (renewed again in 2013 until 2015) to support IAEA nuclear and radiological security activities, particularly in the areas of cyber-security, strengthening of national nuclear security systems,

physical protection of nuclear material, nuclear material accounting, security of radioactive sources, detection and response.

63. In financial terms, French has contributed support in the amount of €730,000 each year since 2011, for a total of €2.8 million since 2010. An additional €4 million in unearmarked contributions since 2003 have helped to finance the repatriation of radioactive sources. In this context, France has, inter alia, assisted with the identification and securing of French sources exported abroad.

D. Support for peer review missions

64. Besides hosting a peer review mission in November 2011, France organized a seminar in Paris on 4 and 5 December 2013, in cooperation with IAEA, on peer review missions; it was attended by 43 States and international organizations. The seminar was an opportunity to share lessons learned from those missions and to encourage all States that had not yet done so to host such missions. Finally, the French authorities have provided support personnel for the preparation of IAEA missions and training activities.

E. Efforts to minimize highly enriched uranium

65. Since 2010, France has been working with a number of partner States to identify alternative technologies that do not require the use of highly enriched uranium in the production of medical radioisotopes and the manufacture of fuel for high-performance research reactors.

F. Efforts to secure radioactive sources

66. The potential use of radioactive sources for malicious purposes poses a real threat to international security. In 2011, accordingly, France signed an agreement with IAEA to identify sources exported by French companies and to secure those sources in the countries where they are now located or, where that is impossible, to bring them back to France for processing. This work has already resulted in an extensive inventory of high-activity radioactive sources that have been exported; of the 300 sources thus identified, just under 200 require action. The repatriation decision will be taken for each source on a case-by-case basis. Several repatriation operations have already taken place in recent years and exploratory missions are under way for possible repatriations from several new countries.

67. France maintains a firm commitment to securing and repatriating radioactive sources in the context of the Nuclear Security Summit and the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, established by the Group of Eight. France has invested €4 million to these activities, which are ongoing.

68. At the Nuclear Security Summit held in The Hague on 24 and 25 March 2014, the President of the French Republic announced the launch of an initiative to enhance the security of high-activity radioactive sources security through activities in three high-priority areas:

(a) Strengthening of the international framework applicable to these sources by improving the application of existing instruments and by assessing any requirements expected under new instruments.

(b) Reduction of the use of these sources by developing alternative technologies.

(c) Strengthening of cooperation between suppliers of these sources in order to develop common good practices that better address end-of-life management of the sources.

69. In order to begin the practical implementation of these high-priority activities, France has proposed a joint statement, expected to be adopted at the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit within an international framework. It will furthermore co-chair with the United States of America a technical meeting organized by IAEA with a view to identifying and promoting initiatives on alternative technologies not requiring high-activity radioactive sources.

G. Efforts concerning the transport of nuclear material

70. France is also committed to ensuring the safe transport of nuclear material. Together with the Japan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, France initiated, within the framework of IAEA, a constructive dialogue with coastal States which, in September 2013, led to the adoption of a road map for specific actions on the information to be conveyed to those States, particularly in the days preceding transport.

71. In that same vein, on 17 June 2015, France will conduct a security exercise with coastal States within the framework of IAEA. The exercise will test the quality of emergency communication procedures in the event of an incident.

72. Lastly, France actively contributes to the work of the transport working group of the Nuclear Security Summit. In June 2015, it will participate in two simulation exercises on rail and air transport.

IV. Nuclear-weapon-free zones

73. France has long supported the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. The regional approach is an important means of promoting disarmament and non-proliferation.

A. Ratification of protocols to treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones

74. France is a party to the protocols to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga), to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba) and to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia (Treaty of Semipalatinsk).

75. Regarding the Treaty of Semipalatinsk, France, as one of the five nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty, led a fruitful dialogue with the five Central Asian States, which resulted in the signature, in New York, on 6 May 2014, of the Protocol to that Treaty, during the third Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. On 17 October 2014, France also became the first State to ratify the Protocol.

76. By so doing France reiterated to more than 100 States the security assurances it had given unilaterally in its statement of 6 April 1995.

77. In 2012, France and Mongolia signed two parallel declarations on Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status.

78. In addition, France is a party to the Antarctic Treaty of 1959, which bans nuclear tests and weapons in Antarctica.

B. Outlook for the signature of new protocols

79. With respect to the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone established under the Treaty of Bangkok, France, together with the four other nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty, is continuing discussions with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to seek solutions acceptable to all stakeholders in response to the difficulties identified. It attended a meeting of experts from ASEAN and from the five nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty during the sixty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

C. Middle East zones free of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems

80. From the outset, France has supported the plan to create a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. France calls on all States concerned to implement the resolution adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in order to make progress towards a lasting peace in the Middle East. At meetings of the First Committee of the General Assembly, it consistently votes in favour of texts supporting that objective.

81. Organization of a conference on that zone is an important measure contained in the action plan adopted by the 2010 Review Conference. Understandably, there was disappointment with the announcement in late 2012 that the conference was to be postponed. However, the cycle is not completed and France continues to support the facilitator, Mr. Jaakko Laajava.

82. In addition, France intends to help create the conditions for achievement of the objectives of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. It is working toward that goal, in particular, though unrelenting efforts to resolve tensions in the region, especially with respect to the Middle East peace process. It also works to ensure that all States parties to the Treaty fulfil their nuclear non-proliferation obligations. That is the goal being pursued by France, in conjunction with its partners in the Group of Six, in order to reach a negotiated settlement to the Iranian nuclear crisis, which is

threatening peace and security in the region. As the Security Council recalled in its resolutions 1747 (2007), 1803 (2008) and 1929 (2010), on the nuclear situation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a solution to the Iranian nuclear issue would contribute to global non-proliferation efforts and to realizing the objective of a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction, including their means of delivery.

83. France is also helping to implement the 1995 resolution on the Middle East by strongly supporting the universalization of the principal non-proliferation instruments, factors for collective security, within the framework of its bilateral relations with the countries of the region and in relevant multilateral forums. It calls on all States that have not yet acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to do so, and to implement it fully. It also urges all States in the region to accede without delay to the other existing conventions and instruments on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

V. Compliance with non-proliferation commitments and other issues

84. Proliferation crises constitute serious threats to international and regional security and stability. They are an obstacle to the development of civil nuclear cooperation. They impede disarmament by undermining mutual trust. With the worsening of these crises, it is more vital than ever to make decisions regarding the consequences of a proven violation of the Treaty or of the abuse of the right of withdrawal.

A. Proliferation crises

1. Islamic Republic of Iran

85. In 2013, during the Iranian proliferation crisis, France negotiated with its partners Germany, the United Kingdom, the European Union, the United States, the Russian Federation and China (E3/EU+3), with a mandate from the Security Council, an interim agreement to halt the progression of the major proliferation aspects of Iran's nuclear programme. Thus, a joint action plan was approved in Geneva on 24 November 2013 and entered into force on 20 January 2014. France and its partners have spared no effort in persuading the Islamic Republic of Iran to agree to significant non-proliferation measures. The implementation of this agreement by the Islamic Republic of Iran is thus far satisfactory, as confirmed by IAEA in its monthly reports. France will ensure that it remains so throughout the implementation process.

86. France is determined to continue its efforts to reach a lasting diplomatic solution based on the restoration of confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. The joint action plan of November 2013 supplies the framework and parameters on the basis of which the E3/EU+3 group and the Islamic Republic of Iran have been negotiating, for over a year now, a long-term agreement on the Iranian nuclear situation. During these negotiations, which have already been extended twice and will continue until 30 June 2015, France stresses the need, within the Group of Six and vis-à-vis the Islamic Republic of Iran, for credible and lasting solutions to be identified in each area. It is indeed crucial to achieve a robust

agreement in order to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime. In that regard, the resolution of the outstanding issues in the Iranian nuclear programme identified by IAEA in 2011 is an important condition for achieving a long-term agreement. It will be essential in enabling IAEA, once an additional protocol is implemented by the Islamic Republic of Iran, to assure the international community that the Islamic Republic of Iran has no undeclared nuclear material or activities.

2. Democratic People's Republic of Korea

87. France is deeply concerned at the continuation by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, which have been condemned many times by the Security Council. The objective remains the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantling of the facilities involved in those programmes and the return of IAEA inspectors without preconditions. In that connection, France stresses in particular that the ballistics dimension of the proliferation activities carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should not be ignored. Hence, it strongly condemned the ballistic test of December 2012 and the nuclear test of February 2013, both carried out in violation of Security Council resolutions.

88. France actively supports the resumption of dialogue in the framework of the six-party talks, in which it is not involved. For negotiations to resume, however, it is essential for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to adopt practical, binding measures that demonstrate its willingness to cooperate in achieving the goal of a denuclearized Korean peninsula, and thus rebuild trust. Far from doing so, Democratic People's Republic of Korea has increasingly been issuing provocative statements about its determination to step up the development of its nuclear programme.

B. Withdrawal (article X)

89. France has taken an active part in the debate on withdrawal from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (article X) and its consequences occasioned by the announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 10 January 2013 of its intention to withdraw from the Treaty.

90. States parties' adoption of measures on that issue, which has been under debate for more than a decade, is essential to the Treaty's credibility and integrity and to the consolidation of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. It is unacceptable for any State having benefited from the provisions and cooperation provided for in article IV to acquire nuclear materials, facilities and technologies to withdraw from the Treaty with impunity and to use the resources so acquired for military purposes, or to withdraw after diverting them from civilian to military purposes in violation of the Treaty.

91. The point of this initiative is not to deny States the right of withdrawal, which is conferred by the Treaty itself in article X. Rather, the point is to recall how that right, which is circumscribed both by the Treaty and by international law, must be exercised, and especially to orchestrate the best possible response by the international community in case of abuse of the right of withdrawal.

92. France has thrown its support behind the proposals made in various working papers, in particular, those of the European Union, the United States, the Russian Federation and Ukraine as well as other States parties. These proposals are in agreement on many points, such as the need for rapid consultations between States parties; the central role of IAEA in verifying compliance with international non-proliferation obligations in advance of such withdrawal; and the importance of maintaining effective control over the nuclear materials and equipment of the State that has given notice of its withdrawal.

VI. Other contributions to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons

A. Financial oversight

93. France participates in the work of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to establish international recommendations for the criminalization of financing of proliferation in all its forms and of complicity in such action. France helped to develop FATF Recommendation 7, adopted in February 2012, which calls on States to implement targeted financial sanctions against any persons financing activities prohibited by Security Council resolutions adopted on the basis of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

94. Pursuant to that international Recommendation, France has created in its domestic law a charge of "financing of proliferation" (Law No. 2011-266 of 14 March 2011). The law imposes criminal penalties of up to 20 years in prison and a fine of €7.5 million on any person having provided, collected or managed funds, securities or assets of whatever kind for the conduct of an activity related to proliferation. France encourages States that have not yet done so to strengthen their national legislation accordingly.

B. Counter-proliferation policy

95. France participates in efforts to intercept assets used in proliferation, and in 2003 was among the States that launched the Proliferation Security Initiative. It is a member of the Initiative's Operational Experts Group, and is as such one of the States most invested in counter-proliferation operations.

96. Seeking to enhance the effectiveness of Initiative, France proposed, in April 2013, the creation of a Mediterranean component. The Mediterranean is a major international trade route and one of those most used by proliferating states to acquire various prohibited resources.

97. To implement the Initiative, France is currently organizing, together with Germany, an awareness-raising workshop for all Mediterranean States and States invested in the Mediterranean, on the challenges related to the Mediterranean Sea and the need to expand counter-proliferation efforts.

C. Combating intangible transfers and the dissemination of knowledge and expertise

98. Transfers of expertise and sensitive technology can be hijacked and applied to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

' 9. To prevent such hijacking, in France, of knowledge and expertise that could contribute to the development of proliferation programmes, whether nuclear, biological, chemical or ballistic, France has now supplemented its legislation for the protection of French scientific and technical potential, established under Decree No. 2011-1425 of 2 November 2011, with a section on counter-proliferation.

D. Support for implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)

100. France supports the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). Since 2004, France has provided assistance in the form of bilateral actions vis-à-vis requesting States and has made voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for Global and Regional Disarmament Activities, which finances the Committee established pursuant to the resolution.

101. France will shortly provide an updated report on its implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) at the national level, in the light of the considerable strengthening in French law of nuclear, biological and chemical security, as well as of counter-proliferation efforts.

Section III
National measures related to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy

102. Pursuant to Article IV of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, France actively participates in the international community's efforts to share the benefits of civil nuclear energy as safely and securely as possible while ensuring non-proliferation.

I. Promotion of peaceful uses

A. Support for the development of energy applications

1. Sharing of nuclear technologies and expertise

103. France considers at the implementation of a nuclear power programme requires the acquisition of comprehensive state-of-the-art knowledge and skills and the maintenance of a strong nuclear safety and security culture.

104. France has broad nuclear expertise, from which many countries are benefiting in the following areas:

(a) Design and construction of third-generation reactors meeting the most demanding safety and security standards over the whole lifetime of the installation, using a range of different reactors based on the EPR programme (1,650 megawatts electrical (MWe)) and the ATMEA1 reactor (1,100 MWe).

(b) Safe and efficient long-term operation of reactors.

(c) Control of the entire fuel cycle and related services, contributing to secure and sustainable supply and the safe management of materials.

(d) A vital contribution to the development of the nuclear systems of the future (the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) project; studies for the Advanced Sodium Technological Reactor for Industrial Demonstration (ASTRID), a sodium-cooled fast neutron reactor project; work on low- and medium-power reactors; the Jules Horowitz reactor, currently under construction).

2. Specific institutional services

105. France cooperates with a growing number of countries and pays special attention to the needs of developing countries.

106. France offers those of its partners that wish to develop a nuclear power programme coordinated assistance in the preparation of the necessary infrastructure. The French International Nuclear Agency (AFNI), established in 2008, intervenes in the study, diagnosis, consultancy and training phases to help such countries acquire the skills necessary to conduct their projects under optimal conditions, in coordination with IAEA initiatives. AFNI draws on the expertise of all industrial and institutional actors in the French nuclear sector (the Institute for Radiological Protection and Nuclear Safety, the National Agency for Radioactive Waste Management, AREVA and Électricité de France (EDF)).

3. Priority given to training

107. France has developed a specific training system closely linked to the needs and control of the nuclear industry and to research. The training offered covers all of the professions and skills required in the sector.

108. Foreign students enjoy broad access to the training: every year, approximately 20 per cent of those graduating from French master's programmes in nuclear energy are foreign nationals. The International Institute of Nuclear Energy, which facilitates access to all French training in the area, is the gateway for all foreign students who wish to benefit from such training.

109. French academic programmes are supplemented by France's acceptance of IAEA fellows, professionals and students, for internships in or study visits to hospital services (radiotherapy and nuclear medicine units in particular), research institutes and industry players. In 2014, France hosted 27 people of 16 nationalities for internships and 38 people of 19 nationalities for study visits.

110. In parallel with the September 2014 meetings of the IAEA Board of Governors, France launched a capacity-building initiative on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The initiative was designed to strengthen the effectiveness of international cooperation to meet the rising demand for assistance from States participating in training for the first time.

4. Support for international initiatives related to the nuclear fuel cycle

111. During its Presidency of the European Union, France and its European partners made a commitment to a European Union financial participation of up to €25 million in and technical contribution to the establishment of a bank of low-enriched uranium

under the auspices of IAEA. The establishment of the bank was authorized by the IAEA Board of Governors in November 2010; it will foster the development of economically viable nuclear power programmes while limiting the risks of proliferation. France has also supported other initiatives in the field of multilateral nuclear fuel assurance, for example the United Kingdom-led nuclear fuel assurance project and the Angarsk low-enriched uranium reserve proposed by the Russian Federation, both of which were approved by the IAEA Board of Governors.

B. Nuclear applications for development

112. France supports the IAEA technical cooperation programme and the development of nuclear applications for the benefit of all through financial contributions, the provision of expertise and the hosting of interns and professionals for training in various fields, including agronomy, nuclear medicine and environmental protection.

II. Provision of technical assistance through the International Atomic Energy Agency to its member States

113. France actively supports the activities of the Department of Nuclear Energy for the development of the infrastructure necessary for the establishment of a nuclear power programme through the provision of experts and financial contributions and the organization of training or technical meetings in France.

114. The IAEA technical cooperation programme supports member States' efforts to acquire nuclear technology. France supports the programme through participation of its experts in projects and through extrabudgetary contributions, in addition to its contribution to the Technical Cooperation Fund, for the funding of "footnote-a/" projects, i.e. those which were unfunded when the programme was approved. Between 2005 and 2013, France helped to fund 18 technical cooperation projects.

115. Health is a priority action area for France, which makes regular financial contributions to the Agency's Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy; receives and treats radiation accident victims in specialized units; supports the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications research programmes designed to combat infectious diseases; and sponsors partnerships between IAEA and French institutions such as the Development Research Institute and the National Cancer Institute.

116. France is also active in the development of nuclear technologies with applications in agriculture and environmental protection. It participates, for example, in the financing of technical cooperation projects in Africa designed to improve crop production through advanced irrigation techniques.

III. Nuclear safety and nuclear liability

A. Action to strengthen the safety framework

117. France considers that the magnitude of the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant and its consequences has confirmed the need for a policy of making nuclear safety and transparency absolute requirements. The French authorities have

always advocated for improving nuclear safety worldwide, maintaining it at the highest level and fostering the development of a responsible nuclear energy sector at the international level.

1. On French territory

118. In 2011 and 2012 France carried out additional safety evaluations, not only of nuclear reactors but also of research facilities and factories involved in the nuclear fuel cycle. A national action plan, published in December 2012 by the Nuclear Safety Authority following those evaluations, was peer reviewed at the European level.

119. France has also hosted the following IAEA nuclear safety peer review missions: one Operational Safety Review Team (OSART) mission per year and a new Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission in 2014. Because the IRRS and OSART peer review missions on French soil were conducted in a spirit of transparency, France published their reports and the schedule of past and planned missions.

120. Lastly, France has sought to enhance its preparedness and its response to nuclear and radiological crises by drawing up and disseminating a national crisis management plan. The operators of nuclear facilities have also participated in this effort by establishing emergency response teams (the EDF Force d'Action Rapide du Nucléaire and the AREVA Force d'Intervention Nationale).

2. At the international level

(a) Support for the International Atomic Energy Agency

121. France contributed to the definition and implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. Subsequently, in December 2012, it published a national version of the IAEA Action Plan. The national version was updated in May 2014.

122. The strengthening of international cooperation in the field of preparedness for and response to nuclear and radiological emergencies is also essential. Among other support actions, France has provided summary considerations in the form of nine concrete proposals designed to redefine the operational role and capacities of the IAEA Incident and Emergency Centre (IEC).

(b) Strengthening of the international safety framework

123. France is committed to the universalization and strengthening of the international conventions related to nuclear safety. It therefore actively participated in the working group on effectiveness and transparency, responsible for making proposals to strengthen the Convention on Nuclear Safety, and in the process of the diplomatic conference to consider a proposal to amend the Convention on Nuclear Safety, held on 9 February 2015, which resulted in the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety.

(c) Cooperation in the field of regulatory assistance

124. The French Nuclear Safety Authority provides regulatory assistance to third States through bilateral cooperation actions or through multilateral instruments, to help such States to establish a solid safety regulatory framework and an independent safety authority, and to develop a culture of safety.

B. Nuclear liability

125. France supports the establishment of a global nuclear liability regime. The existence of an adequate liability regime for nuclear operators in case of accidents is an essential condition for the responsible and sustainable development of nuclear energy. The universalization of such a regime is a major objective of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety.

126. France and the United States initiated discussions regarding the bases and conditions for the establishment of a global liability regime for nuclear damage, which resulted in the signature of a joint statement in August 2013. The statement reflects the two countries' shared priorities in relation to the fundamental question of compensation for nuclear damage. It affirms their commitment to helping establish and develop a global nuclear liability regime based on treaty relations between States and enabling fair compensation for victims of nuclear accidents, as recommended in the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, and encourages States to join such a regime.

127. France considers that the Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy (Paris Convention), associated with the Convention Supplementary to the Paris Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy, and the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, in their revised versions, as well as the Joint Protocol relating to the Implementation of the Vienna Convention and Paris Convention, constitute an adequate basis for the compensation of nuclear damage.

IV. Other matters

128. France has made transparency and public information an essential part of its nuclear policy through:

(a) A strict policy of transparency and collective participation in the implementation of its nuclear projects, reinforced by Law No. 2006-686 of 13 June 2006 on nuclear transparency and safety, which established in particular a high committee for transparency and information regarding nuclear safety and bolstered the 53 local information committees.

(b) Sustained communication on matters related to nuclear energy.